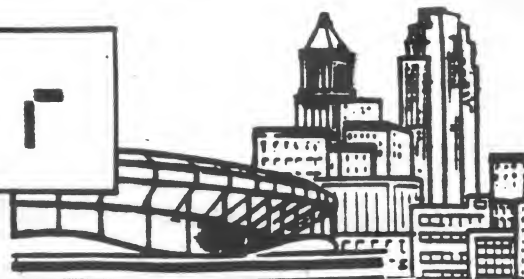


TIME **sinclair**

USERS GROUP OF CINCINNATI



Vol. 2 No. 9

October, 1984

NEXT MEETING:

October 28, 1984

November 18, 1984

December 16, 1984

All meetings are held at 2:00PM
in room 506, Crosley Tower,
University of Cincinnati.

October News

From The

T/S CONNECTION

Bytes and Bytes of stuff been happening this month. Sorta hard to find a beginning place.

First off, AERCO has set a target date of Oct. 30 for the completion of the 2068 Disk Drive Interface. This is good news for every one with a 2068, but is also good news for ZX81, 1000, and 1500 owners because Jerry can get back to work at developing new products for those people. And believe me, he has several projects underway.

Please submit all articles to:
Bill Bernard
6316 Firestone Dr.
Fairfield, OH 45014

The interface will be \$200.00, and the disk drive system will depend on the desires and the financial capabilities of each individual.

Second off, the Smart II software for the 2050 Modem finally arrived, and the parts of it that I have been able to get working are really neat. When Randy and Rick get the rest of the system figured out, it will really be fantastic. At this writing, we can up/down load terminal to terminal, but cannot use the local bulletin board up/down services.

This item is in stock and is \$29.95.

Third off, the new Intermediate/Advanced guide to the 2068 came and went in just a couple of days. Our next shipment should arrive by Oct. 15th. The Beginner/Intermediate Guide has had another printing and will be included in our next shipment.

The manuals are \$9.95, each, and are well worth the bucks.

Fourth off; One of members of the Users Group has suggested that with Christmas coming on, the T/S Connection should start a Lay-A-Way plan.

Be advised that this suggestion has been implemented and we will now accept Lay-A-Way payments, in any amount, on any item, with no additional charges. If something is on your wish list that is available from another supplier, order from the T/S Connection, and we will save you a couple of bucks and lay it away at the same time.

OFFICERS:

Rick Johnson, President 825-1449
Kurt Albrecht, Treasurer 542-3921
Gary Szekeres, Secretary 331-8966

Need a suggestion? How about a 2050 Modem? Get on line with the world, or at least with the local area users.

Fifth off; Jon Roketenetz has written a Graphics program that is being polished up for commercial distribution. This is really a different approach to challenge your imagination. This is for the 2048, and has full color and sound. Jon will probably give a demo at the next meeting.

And, Sixth off; That's all the space Bill has allotted for me this month. See ya at the meetin.

.....Jack

ELECTION TIME

According to the by-laws of the group, the President will appoint a nominating committee at the November meeting.

Would you be interested in serving as an officer, or a member of the Executive Committee?

Do you know someone who would be interested?

Hi there, local TS fans! I'm all psyched over the Tech manual now, so get real omfy and read my SOUNDS.

ITEM #1: The Technical Manual! Rejoice, O followers of the Great Microprocessor! (You know how HARD that is to spell?) The Bible has arrived! Covering everything (but not EVERYTHING) from Input to Output, this baby explains it all. (Almost.)

ITEM #2: Items 2 & 3 from last month's article...

Well, it seems my editor, Bill Bernard, thought I was a bit lengthy last month, so he got out the 'ol scissors....

ITEM #3: PROGRAM OF THE MONTH! Here it is, folks!

```
The Automatic Mountain Maker
5 BORDER 1: PAPER 1: INK 7: CLS
10 FOR I=1 TO 50
20 LET X=INT(RND*255)+1
30 LET Y=INT(RND*175)+1
40 PLOT X,Y
50 NEXT I
60 RANDOMIZE : LET Z=87
70 INK 0
80 FOR J=0 TO 255
90 LET X=RND
100 IF X>=.5 THEN LET Z=Z+1
110 IF X<=.5 THEN LET Z=Z-1
120 PLOT I,Z: DRAW 0,-Z
130 NEXT I
```

Isn't that incredibly real?

ITEM #4: Program #2!

This isn't really a program, but it's just a sound that I was trying to find one day for a game that I'd written. Here she is, guys & gals:

```
10 SOUND 0,1;1,160;1,161;2,1;3,1
61;4,1;5,162;6,31;7,56;8,16;9,15
;10,15;12,60;13,10
20 PAUSE 0
```

Neeto, huh?

Well, I've got a game to finish writing here, guys. I'm going to send a listing of it in to Bill and I'm hoping he'll go ahead & publish it- it's called ELECTRIC CHALLENGE.

Oh-yeah, the joke of the month. What's black and has 2 buttons? Answer- a very tiny black vest.

Ha. Ha. Ha.

Outlook Bright?

One recent evening, I arrived home to find a rather thick envelope from a company called Ramex. Inside was a number of pieces of advertising for add-on products to the Timex 2068 computer. Included was the most recent release of E. Arthur Brown's, "New Product Report # EB5." On the front page were claims that the 2068 was not dead, and that Sinclair would likely be selling the "microdrive," this fall or early in 1985.

The next morning, I decided that I had had it with rumors. I called Sinclair one last time to find out what the status of the 2068/Spectrum was in the U.S. This call resulted in a brief conversation with a very nice person who told me that in order to get answers to my questions, I should speak with Ms. Mary Rhineman, who handled public relations for Sinclair here in the U.S. She further stated that Ms. Rhineman would be happy to return my call later that day. That was a big change over calling Timex.

Much to my surprise, Ms. Rhineman did contact me that afternoon. I discussed with her the E. Arthur Brown advertising and some of the rumors that I had heard. She stated that the Spectrum and its accessories would not be sold in the U.S. by Sinclair or anyone else. The reason for this was that the Spectrum was released in 1982 and was considered out-dated technology. As a result, Sinclair feels that it is not worth the cost of bringing it into the U.S. and promoting. As for the 2068, she hoped that it would continue to be supported by third parties, but stated that Sinclair had no intention of offering support. Finally, the ZX-81 was also not going to be manufactured and brought to the U.S. for the same reasons.

While this information was a major disappointment to me, I think I understand the Sinclair point of view. They are a very small company, fewer than ninety employees, whose mission is to: "...[concentrate] on [their] strengths: the development and marketing of innovative electronics products. Functions such as manufacturing and sales distribution are subcontracted to other suppliers who can accomplish them more efficiently."

While I think anyone who owns a Sinclair product will agree that it is far better than any of the home computers in its price range; Sinclair would have a difficult, if not impossible task, attempting to knock the Commodores, Colecos and Ataris out of the U.S. market. Let's face it, the average person purchasing a home computer would not understand the innovative differences between the Sinclair and the other home computer products. It is also my opinion that Sinclair does not have the financial resources required to compete against those comparatively large U.S. home computer makers. It would not serve any of us, to have them compete and lose!

Is there a bright side? Yes! In my opinion the new "QL" which is to be introduced late this year, fits with Sinclair's marketing strategy. This product is truly innovative in design for a home computer and is priced very competitively at \$499. Will it make it in the U.S. market? That is a question that will only be answered in time.

It is my belief that the QL will make it if, and only if, the product proves to be reliable, does what it is advertised to do and is effectively promoted. I can not form an opinion as to whether Sinclair is up to the job, because I have no idea how they propose to attack the U.S. market.

Reliability is in question on the QL. Rumors out of England concerning the equipment, state that there have been many problems with the original QL's. If those problems have not been corrected by the time the product is introduced into the U.S., all the product innovations and promotion in the world, will not make it a success.

I was unable to determine from my conversation with Ms. Rhineman whether the problems had been addressed.

If you have comments, hear rumors or have questions concerning what is going on with Sinclair, please jot them down and send them to me at the address below. I'll attempt to answer them in future columns.

Next month: Should You Purchase A QL?

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